

The Study of Dogs

It is a well-known fact that people look exactly like their dogs. Whether the owner changes or the dog changes, the fact remains that – the longer they are together – the more alike they will be.

In a now-famous study conducted in Switzerland in 1948, noted German physiologist and animal behaviorist Helmutt Wolfhundert¹ noted that dog owners either take on dominant personalities traits of their dogs or vice versa. Dr. Wolfhundert penned his initial hypothesis after observing that the owners of mean dogs were, by and large, all extraordinarily unpleasant themselves. He then turned his attention to owners of dogs that had been arrested for biting people, and found, without exception, all of them to be obnoxious and awful people. During initial inquiries, he was bitten seven times by owners of biting dogs.

Dr. Wolfhundert's primary discovery was that the owners of bad dogs had been dreadful people long before they became pet owners. This breakthrough led to the first corollary of "Wolfhundert's Law:"

- People resistant to their dog's influence remain appalling.

The second corollary revolves around dog owners who allowed their own personalities to be influenced by their pets – who had all transitioned into nice and happy people. In other words:

- People who act more like their dogs (rather than the other way around) are exceptionally wonderful and pleasant.

They were more loving and more playful, and in spite of drooling occasionally, tended to live three times longer than their more stubborn counterparts, some living as long as 700 years (adjusted with dog-to-human conversion factor).

The secret, it seems, is to be willing to take on the personality traits our dogs constantly demonstrate... loyalty; curiosity; unconditional love; playfulness; the ability to put our past behind us and enjoy a truly restful slumber; and a certain *joie de vie* demonstrated best by sticking our heads out of vehicles in order to bite at the rushing air. In short, dogs tend to smile quite a lot... we would be wise to follow their lead.

--Troy Carlyle (with collaboration by Zoe, the dog)



Zoe prefers not to be disturbed before noon.

In order to really enjoy a dog, one doesn't merely try to train him to be semi-human. The point of it is to open oneself to the possibility of becoming partly a dog. -- Edward Hoagland

¹ A fictional character I just made up.